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No. 140, "Cloud Towers," by Mr. E. Benson. Mr. Benson is not a colorist, therefore, in his pictures one can only look for a truthful representation of nature. There are two facts represented in this picture; a point of sand running out into the sea, and a pile of cumulous clouds in the sky. Upon this point of sand Mr. Benson has drawn a solitary figure; but as he has failed to make any distinction between the wet and the dry sand, it must necessarily be supposed that the unfortunate figure will be drenched to the knees by every wave that rushes over, which argues a great want of prudence on the part of the solitary figure, and a great want of prudence on the part of Mr. Benson.

To Mr. Benson's cumulous cloud we have much more serious objections. He has drawn a vast pile of vapor, full of distinct, towering forms, no one of which casts a shadow upon any other part of the cloud, or receives any reflected light. Any one who has ever observed clouds on a summer afternoon will see the falsity of this; and will agree with us that Mr. Benson has studied clouds no more carefully than he has studied figures, solitary or otherwise.

No. 156, "Comfort in Weariness," by Mr. E. Johnson, though containing the gentleman's inevitable chimney, is very fine in color and sentiment.

No. 155, "On the Housatonic River," by Mr. T. A. Richards. Mr. Richards exhibits five pictures, all of which are very well hung, and none none of which are any better than the pictures he usually exhibits.

No. 174, "The Fool and His Shadow," by Mr. M. Oliver, Jr. A badly drawn figure, with an impossible shadow.

No. 175, "The Mill in the Dingle," by Mr. A. F. Bellows, is exquisite in its rendering of summer's greens, and fine in handling. It is altogether one of the best pictures Mr. Bellows has given us.

No. 181, "Pond Lilies," by Mrs. Jane Hunt, is a most delightful piece of flower-painting.

No. 190, "Still Life," by Mr. J. U. Dolph, is very strongly and truthfully painted, and very fine in color.

R. S.

#### ACADEMY OF MUSIC—ITALIAN OPERA.

Halevy's grand opera, "La Juive," was performed at the Academy on Wednesday night to a brilliant, fashionable, and crowded audience. It gives us much pleasure to be able to state that the public is beginning to appreciate the excellence of the opera company which came among us very modestly, and at the time and season of the year when the people had been overdosed with music, but whose merits have translated indifference into enthusiasm. It is a great triumph for Mr. Grau's artists that they have succeeded, despite the *Herald's* second-hand praise, and the evil rumors which had been circulated previous to their arrival. True merit cannot be killed in New York, if it has but a chance to assert itself.

"La Juive" had the following strong cast; Madame Gazzaniga, Mlle. Boschetti, and Signoris Musiani, Anastasi, Milleri, and Muller. The music of this opera does not satisfy us. It sometimes rises to the exigencies of the situations, which are many and powerful, but is not sustained. A fine thought is evolved, but

it is speedily fritted away, and is generally over-instrumented. One fact is patent—there is so much agony in the action that neither Mozart nor Beethoven, nor even Meyerbeer, could sustain strain upon the most vividly intense passions of our nature. Still there are many fine and strong points in "La Juive," and some ensemble pieces grand in their dramatic power.

Madame Gazzaniga revealed in her personation of the Jewess the same high attributes which rendered her Saffo so surpassingly excellent. She unquestionably enters fully into all the emotions of the character she assumes. She makes a study of the motives of action, and seizes hold of the strong points; but does not neglect the details, who serve to make the picture perfect. The situations in "La Juive" are very powerful, and makes a heavy demand upon the physique of the artist, but Gazzaniga manages her voice so well that it is equal to all demands; and her personation of the Jewess, vocally and dramatically, is an unqualified success. We must again express our appreciation of the wonderful improvement she evidences in her vocalization—its smoothness and finish are truly artistic, and she is more admirable in every respect than when she appeared here before.

Boschetti, looked, sang, and acted Eudoxia most charmingly. Her voice was more perfectly under control than upon any previous appearance, and her execution was true, brilliant, and rapid. She is in all respects a most thorough and excellent artist.

Musiani's performance of the Jew was fine, both vocally and dramatically. His interpretation of the Prayer, in the second act, was full of feeling and passionate fervor, and was worthy of all praise. His voice was in excellent order, and was firm and true, only partially wavering once in a passage of great power. Anastasi grows into more favor with each performance. He has a delicious voice, and one that will bear a strain, without losing its purity. He is an earnest and passionate singer and slights no portion of his rôle. We must award him unqualified praise for his vocal and dramatic efforts last season. Milleri fully sustained the high praise we awarded him for his personation of Mephistopheles. He has a magnificent voice, and uses it with admirable skill. He declaims with point and power, and both his acting and his singing are full of grace, passion; and energy. He is by far the most competent basso that has appeared on the stage for some time.

The chorus was in most respects prompt and accurate, and the orchestra executed the partition excellently throughout. Much credit is due to Signor Muzio for the fine performance of Wednesday evening.

Meyerbeer's splendid opera of "L'Africaine" was produced at the Academy of Music last Friday night, before a large and fashionable audience. It is needless at this date to say anything of the music of this wonderful opera. Certain it is that every hearing serves to develop some new, appreciable, though subtle

beauties of melody, construction, or instrumentation. A work of such magnitude cannot be grasped until after many hearings, so absorbing is the interest attached to each department, vocal, and instrumental.

The cast comprised some of the most prominent members of the company, Gazzaniga, Boschetti, Musiani, Orlandini, Milleri, Colletti, &c. It is not our purpose to make any comparison between the respective merits of the artists on the present occasion and the artists on the present occasion and the artists of Mr. Maretzek's company. Both have their special excellencies, and both are deserving of warm commendation and admiration.

The Selika of Gazzaniga, like all that she does, is characterized by strong individuality. She thoroughly enters into the spirit of every character she attempts, and presents a reading which is full of intelligence, earnestness, and passion. Her reading of the slumber song in the second act had all the wild tenderness which the situation calls for and the music expresses. In the fourth act she rendered that wonderfully passionate music with a force and an abandon that was as grandly effective as it was impulsively natural. The whole of the last scene was impressive and full of power in the expression of the varied emotions of the situation—now of hopeless love, of wild despair, of jealous madness, and of resignation.

The whole was a splendid example of vocal and dramatic power.

Mlle. Boschetti made an admirable Inez. She looked the part to perfection, for she is a woman of rare and exquisite beauty, and dresses in unexceptionable taste. She sang the part finely; her voice was fine and her execution was brilliant, true, and telling. She dignified the part, making it a marked feature. Signor Musiani sustained the difficult rôle of Di Gama with great ability. His voice, though lacking that grandeur of tone to which we have been accustomed of late, was ample for all the musical demand, and he sang the music with admirable taste and judgment, and with an energy and power which called forth repeated plaudits. He is a fine actor, and enters thoroughly into the feelings of the character he personates.

Orlandini's Neluska was a spirited and vigorous personation of the jealous but devoted savage. He sang the music with artistic finish and sustained power throughout. Milleri was also an excellent representative of Don Pedro. His noble and well cultivated voice told out with admirable effect, both in solos and concerted music.

The chorus and orchestra in their execution of this music far exceeded our expectations. To many in each department the music was new, but Signor Muzio kept both steadily in hand, and produced a more excellent result than could have been hoped from so hasty a preparation. Much of the orchestral performance was worthy of warm praise, and the exceptionable points were excusable under the circumstances, for we cannot expect such rounded perfection from a passing company.

as we should demand from a settled management. The shortcomings in certain scenic effects must be overlooked for the same reason, although we should have supposed that the scenery and properties previously used would have been at the disposal of the present incumbent.

The matinee given by the Grau Opera Company on Saturday last, at the Academy, was very numerously attended. A change of performance was necessitated by the sickness of Mme Noel Guidi, so three acts of "Traviata" were substituted for "Ernani," with Mme. Boschetti as Violetti. We have noticed her rendering of this character before, and on this occasion she displayed the same excellences in a larger degree than distinguished her performance then. The same may be said of Signors Anastasi and Orlandini.

The third act of "Faust" concluded the performance. It afforded us another opportunity of witnessing the beautiful interpretation of the character of Marguerite by Mme. Boschetti. It was as charming as ever, and met with the warmest appreciation. Anastasi sang deliciously, and Milleri delighted all by his artistic singing and splendid voice.

#### CONCERTS.

##### THEODORE THOMAS'S LAST GRAND CONCERT.

The last concert of Mr. Thomas's series took place at Irving Hall, on Monday evening. We were glad to see so large an audience present, for Mr. Thomas has certainly deserved well of the public, and should meet with a warm and liberal patronage.

The concert opened with the Festival Overture, "A safe stronghold our God is still," for orchestra, chorus and organ, by Nicolai. We heard this performed for the first time at the great Boston Festival, last year, by a chorus of 700 voices, an orchestra of over a hundred, supported by the great Boston organ. The effect then was stupendously great, and we did not expect to hear it matched under the circumstances here, but we are able to say that it was fully equal in proportion to the numbers employed. The chorus of the Mendelssohn Union, was strong, prompt and effective, and the ensemble was really grand and complete.

The first appearance of a young artist is always fraught with painful interest. He has arrived at that point, after years of patient labor, which is to decide, or at least strongly influence his future career, and the issue to him is one of inconceivable importance. There is much to militate against the full development of his powers—a strange audience, the nervousness consequent upon a first appearance, and the fears of adverse outside influences, all tending to prejudice his chances of success. Mr. Carlyle Petersilea, the pianist on this occasion, an American, we believe, and just returned from his studies in Germany, had to face these conditions, and the difficulties of Henselt's Concerto in F Minor. Mr. Petersilea has evidently studied well and earnestly, for he presents a large degree of execution and a technique of no mean excellence. He interpreted the Concerto in a refined and intelligent manner. His reading of it was not broad nor very marked in character, but there were flashes of sentiment and passion in his performance, expressed in so graceful and earnest a

manner, that satisfied us he had more mastery in his art than he could then control. He had not well calculated the character of the piano he played upon, which resulted in an appearance of thumping in all enforced notes or passages of power for the left hand—the bass being far too strong for the sounding capacity of the tenor and treble. This was a case of miscalculation, and no indication of his general style. His playing of Liszt's "Erliking" did not please us; it was not clearly nor emphatically presented, but he played Chopin's "Berceuse" in a most chaste and beautiful manner. His interpretation was full of sentiment and refinement, and his execution clear, delicate and tender. This composition has rarely been better executed in this city. Mr. Petersilea will, we believe, prove a welcome addition to our solo pianists, which will assuredly be made manifest in his future performances.

The music of "Egmont," which is so grandly characteristic of the genius of Beethoven, was very finely given by the orchestra, but the reading of the poem by Miss Rose Eyttinge was tedious in the extreme. The lady reads very smoothly and pronounces very distinctly, but her delivery is totally lacking in passion, emphasis and expression. The march and chorus from Beethoven's "Ruins of Athens" was also finely performed by the orchestra, and the Mendelssohn Union executed the chorus with admirable precision and effect.

Miss Brainerd sang the solos in "Egmont," and Mozart's grand aria, "Non temer amato bene," in an artistic and most acceptable manner.

The concluding chorus, Handel's "Hallelujah," was only moderately well performed; the points were not taken up firmly, and there was a certain unsteadiness which took from its solidity and dignity.

If we cannot congratulate Mr. Theodore Thomas upon the monetary success of his Symphony Soirees, although we know nothing to the contrary; we very sincerely thank him for the fine concerts which he gave at considerable risk and great personal sacrifice and labor. He presented novelties, some of which, though in our judgment not good music, from its European reputation deserved a trial, while the rest was good and pleasant to hear. He made his concerts well worthy the patronage of the public, and has established them on a firm basis, so that we may hope for a brilliant subscription list for next season.

##### DR. CUTLER'S CHORAL FESTIVALS.

The experiment of Choral Festivals was first tried by Dr. Cutler at Trinity Church last year. The plan was designed by Dr. Cutler in all its details. He wrote the lecture relating to the Cathedrals of England, and the Cathedral services, and selected the music, illustrating the discourse, to be sung exclusively by male voices, boys and men. Two of these Festivals were given with brilliant success. Encouraged by this success Dr. Cutler determined to train a large choir of boys' voices, and to repeat the Choral Festivals this year at Irving Hall. The first was given on Tuesday, the second on Thursday, and the third, a matinee, on Saturday of last week.

The Lecture is somewhat discursive and general; its interest would be greatly heightened if it contained more detailed information of the subjects to which it alludes. One anachronism occurred in the music which is supposed to be of the several dates mentioned in the Lecture, where he gives a composition by a living composer, Dr. Turle, to illustrate the music of a very remote date. Dr. Cutler read

the Lecture very distinctly, but he lacks variety of intonation to lighten the text and impart interest.

The choir, consisting of fifty boys and fifty men, contains some splendid voices; we should judge that all are good, for the ensemble throughout was most excellent. The most beautiful and effective chorus was from Handel's "Sampson," "Round about the Starry Throne." This chorus was most perfectly sung; in all points of light and shade, precision and delicacy, it could hardly be excelled, and was enthusiastically received. The "Angel Trio," from Mendelssohn's "Elijah," was sung tastefully and effectively by Masters Toedt, Raeburn, and Grandin. Their voices blended beautifully, and their intonation was perfect. It was very pleasant to hear this lovely trio so charmingly interpreted. That fine old canon "Non Nobis Domine," though correctly sung, was very much lacking in color, and was by no means improved by being accompanied. The performance of the other selections on the programme gave evidence of careful study, and was altogether unexceptionable.

Master Toedt, the principal boy singer, has a beautiful and well cultivated voice, and sings with remarkable taste and expression. His singing of Mendelssohn's great aria, "Hear ye, Israel," was distinguished by rare intelligence. We could hardly have expected such grace, expression, and conception from one so young. He certainly possesses fine musical instinct to a greater degree than any of the boy singers we have yet heard. With care he can be made something remarkable. The only danger is too much petting and flattery, to which all youthful prodigies are subjected.

The whole scene from "Elijah," "The Season of Drought," with solos and chorus, closed the performance. This wonderfully dramatic scene was, chorally, a great success. Mr. Aiken sang the impressive solos of "Elijah" in a correct but chillingly cold manner. Neither his delivery nor his pronunciation was good. The chorus singing of this whole scene was admirable in the extreme. Each movement was given with remarkable accuracy, and in point of effect we have never heard finer choral singing. The pianissimos, the fortissimos, and crescendos were produced with extraordinary color, and were really magical in their brilliant contrasts.

Mr. George W. Morgan conducted, and it is but just to say that he filled his position most ably. His leading was prompt and spirited, and guided by a clear judgment which produced the admirable choral results which we have described. Dr. Cutler presided at the organ, and has greatly added to his reputation by these performances. He has proved himself an acute and able trainer, and a musician of fine taste and judgment. The three concerts have proved a great success, the two last especially, which attracted crowded and brilliant audiences. We hope that Dr. Cutler will give us similar concerts in the Fall. We understand that Dr. Cutler will give these Choral Festivals in various towns in the New England States during the next month.

##### COMPLIMENTARY CONCERT TO MISS RICE.

This concert was given at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and proved the great popularity Miss Rice enjoys with the most refined and music appreciating public of that city. Miss Florence A. Rice came here recently from Michigan, where she was highly estimated for the beautiful voice and brilliant execution she displayed there in concerts. Coming